THE

ART

OF

POETRY,

Written in *French* by

The Sieur *de* BOILEAU.

In Four CANTO'S.

Made *Engliſh*,

By Sir *WILLIAM SOAMES*.

Since Reviſ'd by JOHN DRYDEN, Eſq;

LONDON:

Printed and Sold by *H. Hills*, in *Black-fryars* near the Water-ſide. 1710.

(Price three Pence.)

THE

ART

OF

POETRY,

Written in *French* by

The Sieur *de* BOILEAU.

In Four Cantos.

Made *English*,

By Sir WILLIAM SOAMES,

Since Revis'd by JOHN DRYDEN, Esq;

LONDON:

Printed and Sold by *H. Hills*, in *Black-Fryars* near the Water-side. 1710.

(Price three Pence.)

46
267
BRITISH MUSEUM

Canto I.

RAsh Author, 'tis a vain presumptuous Crime
To undertake the Sacred Art of Rhyme;
If at thy Birth the Stars that rul'd thy Sence
Shone not with a Poetic Influence:
In thy strait Genius thou wilt still be bound,
Find *Phœbus* deaf, and *Pegasus* unsound.
You then, that burn with the desire to try
The dangerous Course of charming Poetry;
Forbear in frutless Verse to lose your time,
Or take for Genius the desire of Rhyme:
Fear the allurements of a specious Bait,
And well consider your own Force and Weight.
Nature abounds in Wits of every kind,
And for each Author can a Talent find:
One may in Verse describe an Amorous Flame,
Another sharpen a short Epigram:
Waller a Hero's mighty Acts extol;
Spencer Sing *Rosalind* in Pastoral:
But Authors that themselves too much esteem,
Lose their own Genius, and mistake their Theme;
Thus in times past * *Dubartas* vainly Writ,
Allaying Sacred Truth with trifling Wit,
Impertinently, and without delight,
Describ'd the *Israelites* Triumphant Flight,

* Dubartas *Translated by* Sylvester.

And following *Moſes* o'er the Sandy Plain,
Periſh'd with *Pharaoh* in th' *Arabian* Main.
What-e're you write of Pleaſant or Sublime,
Always let ſenſe accompany your Rhyme:
Falſely they ſeem each other to oppoſe;
Rhyme muſt be made with Reaſon's Laws to cloſe:
And when to conquer her you bend your force,
The Mind will Triumph in the Noble Courſe;
To Reaſon's yoke ſhe quickly will incline,
Which, far from hurting, renders her Divine:
But, if neglected, will as eaſily ſtray,
And maſter Reaſon, which ſhe ſhould obey.
Love Reaſon then: and let whate'er you Write
Borrow from her its Beauty, Force, and Light.
Moſt Writers, mounted on a reſty Muſe,
Extravagant, and Senceleſs Objects chuſe;
They Think they err, if in their Verſe they fall
On any thought that's Plain, or Natural:
Fly this exceſs; and let *Italians* be
Vain Authors of falſe glitt'ring Poetry.
All ought to aim at Sence; but moſt in vain
Strive the hard Paſs, and ſlipp'ry Path to gain:
You drown, if to the right or left you ſtray;
Reaſon to go has often but one way.
Sometimes an Author, fond of his own Thought,
Purſues his Object till it's over-wrought:
If he deſcribes a Houſe, he ſhews the Face,
And after walks you round from place to place;
Here is a *Viſta*, there the Doors unfold,
Balcone's here are balluſtred with Gold;

Then counts the Rounds and Ovals in the Halls,
* *The Feſtoons, Freezes, and the Aſtragals:*
Tir'd with his tedious Pomp, away I run,
And skip'd o'er twenty Pages to be gone.
Of ſuch Deſcriptions the vain Folly ſee,
And ſhun their barren Superfluity.
All that is needleſs carefully avoid,
The Mind once ſatisfi'd, is quickly cloy'd:
He cannot Write, who knows not to give o'er;
To mend one Fault, he makes a hundred more:
A Verſe was weak, you turn it much too ſtrong,
And grow Obſcure, for fear you ſhould be Long.
Some are not Gaudy, but are Flat and Dry;
Not to be low, another ſoars too high.
Would you of every one deſerve the Praiſe?
In Writing, vary your Diſcourſe and Phraſe;
A frozen Style, that neither Ebs or Flows,
Inſtead of pleaſing, makes us gape and doze.
Thoſe tedious Authors are eſteem'd by none
Who tire us, Humming the ſame heavy Tone.
Happy, who in his Verſe can gently ſteer,
From Grave, to Light; from pleaſant, to Severe:
His Works will be admir'd where-ever found,
And oft with Buyers will be compaſs'd round.
In all you Write, be neither Low nor Vile:
The meaneſt Theme may have a proper Style.
The dull Burleſque appear'd with impudence,
And pleas'd by Novelty, in Spite of Senſe.
All, except trivial points, grew out of date;
Parnaſſus ſpoke the Cant of *Billingſgate*:

* *Verſe of* Scudery.

Boundleſs and Mad, diſorder'd Rhyme was ſeen:
Diſguis'd *Apollo* chang'd to *Harlequin.*
This Plague, which firſt in Country Towns began,
Cities and Kingdoms quickly over-ran;
The dulleſt Scriblers ſome Admirers found,
And the * *Mock-Tempeſt* was a while renown'd:
But this low ſtuff the town at leaſt deſpis'd,
And Scorn'd the Folly that they once had priz'd;
Diſtinguiſh'd Dull, from Natural and Plain,
And left the Villages to *Flecknо*'s Reign.
Let not ſo mean a Style your muſe debaſe,
But learn from † *Butler* the Buffooning grace:
And let Burleſque in Ballads be employ'd,
Yet noiſy Bumbaſt carefully avoid,
Nor think to raiſe (tho' on *Pharſalia*'s Plain)
* *Millions of mourning Mountains of the Slain:*
† Nor, with *Dubartas*, bridle up the Floods,
And Perriwig with Wool the bald-pate Woods.
Chuſe a juſt Style; be Grave without conſtraint,
Great without Pride, and Lovely without Paint:
Write what your Reader may be pleas'd to hear:
And, for the Meaſure, have a careful Ear.
On eaſy Numbers fix your happy choice;
Of jarring Sounds avoid the odious noiſe:
The fulleſt Verſe and the moſt labour'd Senſe,
Diſpleaſe us, if the Ear once take offence.
Our ancient Verſe, (as homely as the Times,)
Was rude, unmeaſur'd, only Tagg'd with Rhimes:

---

* *The* Mock-Tempeſt, *a Play, written by Mr.* Duſſet.
† *Hudebraſs.* * Verſe of *Brebeuf.* † Verſe of *Dubartas.*

Number

Number and Cadence, that have ſince been Shown,
To thoſe unpoliſh'd Writers were unknown.
* *Fairfax* was He, who, in that Darker Age,
By his juſt Rules reſtrain'd Poetic Rage:
Spencer did next in Paſtorals excel,
And taught the Noble art of Writing well:
To ſtricter Rules the Stanza did reſtrain,
And Found for Poetry a richer Vein.
Then *D'Avenant* came; who, with a new found Art,
Chang'd all, ſpoil'd all, and had his way apart:
His haughty Muſe all others did deſpiſe,
And thought in Triumph to bear off the Prize,
Till the Sharp-ſighted Critics of the Times
In their Mock-*Gondibert* expos'd his Rhimes;
The Laurels he pretended did refuſe,
And daſh'd the hopes of his aſpiring Muſe.
This head-ſtrong Writer, falling from on high,
Made following Authors take leſs Liberty.
Waller came at laſt, but was the firſt whoſe Art
Juſt Weight and Meaſure did to Verſe impart;
That of a well-plac'd Word could teach the force,
And ſhew'd for Poetry a nobler Courſe:
His happy Genius did our Tongue Refine,
And eaſy Words with pleaſing Numbers joyn:
His Verſes to good method did apply,
And chang'd harſh Diſcord to Soft Harmony.
All own'd his Laws; which, long approv'd and try'd,
To preſent Authors now may be a *Guide*.
Tread boldly in his Steps, ſecure from Fear,
And be, like him, in your Expreſſions clear.

* *Fairfax* in his Tranſlation of *Godfrey* of Bullen.

If in your Verſe you drag, and Senſe delay,
My Patience tires, my Fancy goes aſtray,
And from your vain Diſcourſe I turn my mind,
Nor ſearch an Author troubleſome to find.
There is a kind of Writer pleas'd with Sound,
Whoſe Fuſtian head with clouds is compaſs'd round,
No Reaſon can diſperſe 'em with its Light:
Learn then to Think, e'er you pretend to Write,
As your Idea's clear, or elſe obſcure,
Th' Expreſſion follows perfect, or impure:
What we conceive, with eaſe we can expreſs;
Words to the Notions flow with readineſs.

Obſerve the Language well in all you write,
And ſwerve not from it in your loftieſt flight.
The ſmootheſt Verſe, and the exacteſt Senſe
Diſpleaſe us, if ill *Engliſh* give offence:
A barb'rous Phraſe no Reader can approve;
Nor Bombaſt, Noiſe, or Affectation Love.
In ſhort, without pure Language, what you Write,
Can never yield us profit, or Delight.
Take time for thinking; never work in haſt;
And value not your ſelf for writing faſt.
A rapid Poem, with ſuch fury writ,
Shews want of Judgment, not abounding Wit.
More pleas'd we are to ſee a River lead
His gentle Streams along a flow'ry Mead,
Than from high Banks to hear loud Torrents roar,
With foamy Waters on a Muddy Shore.
Gently make haſt, of Labour not afraid;
A hundred times conſider what you've ſaid:

Poliſh, repoliſh, every Colour lay,
And ſometimes add; but oft'ner take away.
'Tis not enough, when ſwarming Faults are writ,
That here and there are ſcatter'd Sparks of Wit;
Each Object muſt be fix'd in the due place,
And diff'ring parts have Correſponding Grace:
Till by a curious Art diſpos'd we find
One perfect whole, of all the pieces joyn'd.
Keep to your Subject cloſe, in all you ſay;
Nor for a ſounding Sentence ever ſtray.
The publick Cenſure for your Writings fear,
And to your ſelf be Critic moſt ſevere.
Fantaſtic Wits their darling Follies love;
But find You faithful Friends that will reprove,
That on your Works may look with careful Eyes,
And of your Faults be zealous Enemies:
Lay by an Author's Pride and Vanity,
And from a Friend a Flatterer deſcry,
Who ſeems to like, but means not what he ſays:
Embrace true Counſel, but ſuſpect falſe Praiſe.
A Sycophant will every thing admire;
Each Verſe, each Sentence ſets his Soul on Fire:
All is Divine! there's not a Word amiſs!
He ſhakes with Joy, and weeps with Tenderneſs;
He over-pow'rs you with his mighty Praiſe.
Truth never moves in thoſe impetuous ways:
A Faithful Friend is careful of your Fame,
And freely will your heedleſs Errors blame;
He cannot pardon a neglected Line,
But Verſe to Rule and Order will confine,

Reproves of words the too affected noise,
Here the Sense flags and repetition cloys:
Your Fancy tires and your Discourse grows vain,
Your Terms improper; make them just and plain.
Thus 'tis a faithful Friend will freedom use;
But Authors, (partial to their Darling Muse,)
Think to protect it they have just pretence,
And at your Friendly Counsel take offence.
Said you of this, that the Expression's flat?
Your Servant, Sir; you must excuse me that,
He answers you. This word has here no grace;
Pray leave it out: That, Sir, 's the proper'st Place.
This Turn I like not: 'Tis approv'd by all.
Thus, resolute not from a fault to fall,
If there's a Syllable of which you doubt,
'Tis a sure Reason not to blot it out.
Yet still he says you may his Faults confute,
And over him your pow'r is absolute:
But of his feign'd Humility take heed;
'Tis a Bait lay'd, to make you hear him read:
And when he leaves you, happy in his Muse,
Restless he runs some other to abuse.
And often finds; for in our scribling times
No Fool can want a Sot to praise his Rhymes:
The flattest work as ever, in the Court,
Met with some Zealous *Ass* for its support:
And in all times a forward, Scribling Fop
Has found some greater Fool to cry him up.

Canto II.

Paſtoral.

AS a fair Nymph, when Riſing from her bed,
With ſparkling Diamonds dreſſes not her head:
But, without Gold, or Pearl, or coſtly Scents,
Gathers from neighb'ring Fields her Ornaments:
Such, lovely in its dreſs, but plain withal,
Ought to appear a perfect *Paſtoral*:
Its humble method nothing has of fierce,
But hates the ratling of a lofty Verſe:
There, Native beauty pleaſes, and excites,
And never with harſh Sounds the Ear affrights.
But in this ſtile a Poet often ſpent,
In rage throws by his * Rural Inſtrument,
And vainly, (when diſorder'd thoughts abound,)
Amidſt the Eclogue make the Trumpet Sound:
Pan flies, Alarm'd, into the Neigb'ring Woods,
And frighted *Naiad's* dive into the Floods.
Oppos'd to this another, low in Stile,
Makes Shepherds ſpeak a Language baſe and vile:
His Writings, flat and heavy, without Sound,
Kiſſing the Earth, and creeping on the ground;

* *Flute* Pipe.

You'd

You'd swear that *Randal*, in his Rustick Strains,
Again was quav'ring to the Country Swains,
And changing, without care of Sound or Dress,
Strephon and *Phillis*, into *Tom* and *Bess*.
'Twixt these extreams 'tis hard to keep the right;
For Guides take *Virgil*, and read *Theocrite*:
Be their just Writings, by the Gods inspir'd,
Your constant Pattern, practis'd and admir'd.
By them alone you'l eas'ly comprehend
How Poets, without shame, may condescend
To sing of Gardens, Fields, of Flow'rs, and Fruit,
To stir up Shepherds, and to tune the Flute,
Of Love's reward to tell the happy hour,
Daphne a Tree, *Narcissus* made a Flow'r,
And by what means the Eclogue yet has pow'r
* To make the Woods worthy a Conqueror:
This of their Writings is the grace and flight;
Their risings lofty, yet not out of Sight.

Elegy.

The *Elegy*, that loves a mournful stile,
With unbound hair weeps at a Funeral Pile,
It paints the Lovers Torments, and Delights,
A Mistress Flatters, Threatens, and Invites:
But well these Raptures if you'll make us see,
You must know Love, as well as Poetry.
I hate those Lukewarm Authors, whose forc'd Fire
In a cold style describes a hot Desire,

* *Virg.* Eclog. 4.

That

That ſigh by Rule, and raging in cold blood
Their ſluggiſh Muſe whip to an Amorous mood:
Their feign'd Tranſports appear but flat and vain:
They always ſigh, and always hug their Chain,
Adore their Priſon, and their Suff'rings bleſs,
Make Senſe and Reaſon quarrel as they pleaſe.
'Twas not of old in this affected Tone
That Smooth *Tibullus* made his Amorous moan;
Nor *Ovid*, when, Inſtructed from above,
By Nature's Rules he taught the Art of Love.
The Heart in Elegies forms the Diſcourſe.

Ode.

The Ode is bolder, and has greater force.
Mounting to Heav'n in her Ambitious flight,
Amongſt the Gods and Heroes takes delight;
Of *Piſa's* Wreſtlers tells the Sin'ewy force,
And ſings the duſty Conqueror's glorious Courſe:
To *Simois* ſtreams does fierce *Achilles* bring,
And makes the *Ganges* bow to *Britain's* King.
Sometimes ſhe flies, like an Induſtrious Bee,
And robs the Flow'rs by Nature's Chymiſtry,
Deſcribes the Shepherds Dances, Feaſts, and Bliſs,
And boaſts from *Phyllis* to ſurprize a Kiſs,
When gently ſhe reſiſts with feign'd remorſe,
That what ſhe grants may ſeem to be by force:
Her generous ſtile at random oft will part,
And by a brave diſorder ſhows her Art.
Unlike thoſe fearful Poets, whoſe cold Rhyme
In all their Raptures keep exacteſt time,

That

That ſing th' Illuſtrious Hero's mighty praiſe
(Learn Writers!) by the terms of Weeks and Days:
And dare not from leaſt Circumſtances part,
But take all Towns by ſtricteſt Rules of Art:
Apollo drives thoſe Fops from his abode;
And ſome have ſaid, that once the humorous God
Reſolving all ſuch Scriblers to confound
For the ſhort Sonnet order'd this ſtrict bound:
Set Rules for the juſt Meaſure, and the Time,
The eaſy running, and alternate Rhyme;
But, above all, thoſe Licences deny'd
Which in theſe Writings the lame Senſe Supply'd;
Forbad an uſeleſs Line ſhould find a place,
Or a repeated Word appear with grace.
A faultleſs Sonnet, finiſh'd thus, would be
Worth tedious Volumes of looſe Poetry.
A hundred Scribling Authors, without ground
Believe they have this only Phœnix found:
When yet th' exacteſt ſcarce have two or three
Amongſt whole Tomes, From Faults and Cenſure free.
The reſt, but little read, regarded leſs,
Are ſhovel'd to the Paſtry from the Preſs.
Cloſing the Senſe within the meaſur'd time,
'Tis hard to fit the Reaſon to the Rhyme.

Epigram.

The *Epigram*, with little art compos'd,
Is one good ſentence in a Diſtich clos'd.
Theſe points, that by *Italians* firſt were priz'd,
Our ancient Authors knew not, or deſpis'd:

The

The Vulgar, dazled with their glaring Light,
To their falſe pleaſures quickly they invite;
But publick Favour ſo increas'd their pride,
They over-whelm'd *Parnaſſus* with their Tide.
The Madrigal at firſt was overcome,
And the proud Sonnet fell by the ſame Doom;
With theſe grave Tragedy adorn'd her flights,
And mournful Elegy her Funeral Rites:
A Hero never fail'd 'em on the Stage,
Without his point a Lover durſt not rage;
The Amorous Shepherds took more care to prove
True to their Point, than Faithful to their Love.
Each word, like *Janus*, had a double face:
And Proſe, as well as Verſe allow'd it place:
The Lawyer with Conceit, adorn'd his Speech,
The Parſon without Quibling could not Preach,
At laſt affronted Reaſon look'd about,
And from all ſerious matters ſhut 'em out:
Declar'd that none ſhould uſe 'em without Shame,
Except a ſcattering in the Epigram;
Provided that, by Art, and in due time
They turn'd upon the Thought, and not the Rhyme.
Thus in all parts diſorders did abate;
Yet Quiblers in the Court had leave to prate:
Inſipid Jeſters, and unpleaſant Fools,
A Corporation of dull Punning Drolls.
'Tis not, but that ſometimes a dextrous Muſe
May with advantage a turn'd Senſe abuſe,
And, on a word, may trifle with addreſs;
But above all avoid the fond exceſs,

And think not, when your Verſe and Senſe are lame,
With a dull point to tag your Epigram.
Each Poem his Perfection has a part;
The *Britiſh* Round in plainneſs ſhows his Art;
The Ballad, tho' the pride of Ancient time,
Has often nothing but his humorous Rhyme;
The † Madrigal may ſofter Paſſions move,
And breath the tender Ecſtaſies of Love:

Satyr.

Deſire to ſhow it ſelf, and not to wrong,
Arm'd Virtue firſt with Satyr in its Tongue.
Lucilius was the Man who bravely bold,
To Roman Vices did this Mirror hold,
Protected humble Goodneſs from reproach,
Show'd Worth on foot and Raſcals in the Coach;
Horace his pleaſing Wit to this did add,
And none uncenſur'd could be Fool or mad;
Unhappy was that Wretch, whoſe name might be
Squar'd to the Rules of their Sharp Poetry.
Perſius, obſcure, but full of Senſe and Wit,
Affected brevity in all he writ!
And *Juvenal*, Learn'd as thoſe times could be,
Too far did ſtretch his ſharp Hyperbole;
Tho' horrid Truths through all his Labours ſhine,
In what he writes there's ſomething of Divine;
Whether he blames the *Caprean* Debauch,
Or of *Sejanus* Fall tells the approach,
Or that he makes the trembling Senate come
To the ſtern Tyrant, to receive their Doom;

† *An old way of Writing, which began and ended with the ſame Meaſure.*

Or

Or *Roman* Vice in courſeſt Habit ſhews,
And paints an Empreſs reeking from the Stews:
In all he writes appears a noble Fire;
To follow ſuch a Maſter then deſire.
Chaucer alone, (fix'd on this ſolid Baſe,)
In his old Stile, conſerves a modern Grace:
Too happy, if the Freedom of his Rhymes
Offended not the Method of our Times.

The Latin Writers, Decency neglect;
But modern Readers challenge our Reſpect,
And at immodeſt Writings take Offence,
If clean Expreſſion cover not the Sence.
I love ſharp Satyr, from Obſceneneſs free;
Not Impudence, that preaches Modeſty:
Our *Engliſh*, who in Malice never fail,
Hence, in Lampoons and Libels, learnt to Rail;
Pleaſant Detraction, that by Singing goes
From Mouth to Mouth, and as it marches grows!
Our Freedom in our Poetry we ſee,
That Child of Joy, begot by Liberty.
But, vain Blaſphemer, tremble, when you chuſe
God for the Subject of your Impious Muſe:
At laſt, thoſe Jeſts which Libertines invent
Bring the lewd Author to juſt Puniſhment,
Ev'n in a Song there muſt be Art, and Sence;
Yet ſometimes we have ſeen, that Wine, or Chance:
Have warm'd cold Brains, and given dull Writers Mettle,
And furniſh'd out a Scene for Mr. *S*——:
But for one lucky Hit, that made thee pleaſe,
Let not thy Folly grow to a Diſeaſe,

Nor think thy self a Wit; for in our Age
If a warm Fancy does some Fop ingage;
He neither eats or sleeps, till he has Writ,
But plagues the World with his Adulterate Wit.
Nay, 'tis a wonder, if, in his dire Rage,
He Prints not his dull Follies for the Stage;
And, in the Front of all his Senceless Plays,
Makes * *David Logan* Crown his Head with Bays.

* D. *Logan*, a Graver.

Canto III.

Tragedy.

THere's not a Monster bred beneath the Sky
But, well dispos'd by Art, may please the Eye:
A curious Workman, by his Skill Divine,
From an ill Object makes a good Design.
Thus, to delight us, Tragedy, in Tears
For † *Oedipus*, provokes our Hopes, and Fears:
For Parricide *Orestes* asks relief;
And, to encrease our pleasure, causes grief.
You then, that in this noble Art would rise,
Come; and in lofty Verse dispute the Prize.
Would you upon the Stage acquire Renown,
And for your Judges summon all the Town?
Would you your Works for ever should remain,
And, after Ages past, be sought again?

† Writ by Mr. *Dryden*.

In all you Write, observe with Care and Art
To move the Passions, and incline the Heart.
If, in a labour'd Act, the pleasing Rage
Cannot our Hopes and Fears by turns ingage,
Nor in our mind a feeling Pity raise;
In vain with Learned Scenes you fill your Plays:
Your cold Discourse can never move the Mind
Of a stern Critic, nat'rally unkind;
Who, justly tir'd with your Pedantick flight,
Or falls asleep, or censures all you write.
The Secret is, Attention first to gain;
To move our minds, and then to entertain:
That, from the very op'ning of the Scenes,
The first may show us what the Author means.
I'm tir'd to see an Actor on the Stage
That knows not whether he's to Laugh, or Rage;
Who, an Intrigue unravelling in vain,
Instead of pleasing, keeps my mind in pain:
I'd rather much the nauseous Dunce should say
Downright, my Name is *Hector* in the Play;
Than with a Mass of Miracles, ill joyn'd,
Confound my Ears, and not instruct my Mind.
The Subject's never soon enough expresst;
Your place of Action must be fix'd, and rest
A *Spanish* Poet may, with good event,
In one day's space whole Ages represent;
There oft the Hero of a wandring Stage
Begins a Child, and ends the Play of Age:
But we, that are by Reason's Rules confin'd,
Will, that with Art the Poem be design'd,

That Unity of Action, Time, and Place
Keep the Stage full, and all our Labours grace.
Write not what cannot be with eaſe conceiv'd;
Some Truths may be too ſtrong to be believ'd.
A fooliſh Wonder cannot entertain:
My mind's not mov'd, if your Diſcourſe be vain.
You may relate, what would offend the Eye:
Seeing, indeed, would better ſatisfy;
But there are Objects, that a curious Art
Hides from the Eyes, yet offers to the Heart.
The mind is moſt agreeably ſurpriz'd,
When a well-woven Subject, long diſguis'd,
You on a ſudden artfully unfold,
And give the whole another face, and mould.
* At firſt the Tragedy was void of Art;
A Song; where each Man Danc'd, and Sung his Part,
And of God *Bacchus* roaring out the praiſe
Sought a good Vintage for their Jolly days:
Then Wine, and Joy, were ſeen in each Man's Eyes,
And a fat Goat was the beſt Singer's prize.
Theſpis was firſt, who, all beſmear'd with Lee,
Began this pleaſure for Poſterity:
And, with his Carted Actors, and a Song,
Amus'd the People as he paſs'd along.
Next, *Æſchylus* the diff'rent Perſons plac'd,
And with a better Maſque his Players grac'd:
Upon a Theatre his Verſe expreſs'd,
And ſhow'd his Hero with a Buskin dreſs'd.
Then *Sophocles*, the Genius of his Age,
Increas'd the Pomp, and Beauty of the Stage,

* *The Beginning and Progreſs of* Tragedies.

Ingag'd the Chorus Song in every part,
And poliſh'd rugged Verſe by Rules of Art:
He, in the *Greek*, did thoſe perfections gain
Which the weak *Latin* never could attain.
Our pious Fathers, in their Prieſt-rid Age,
As Impious, and Prophane, abhorr'd the Stage:
A Troop of ſilly Pilgrims, as 'tis ſaid,
Fooliſhly zealous, ſcandalouſly play'd
(Inſtead of Heroes, and of Love's complaints)
The Angels, God, the Virgin, and the Saints.
At laſt, right Reaſon did his Laws reveal,
And ſhow'd the Folly of their ill-plac'd Zeal,
Silenc'd thoſe Nonconformiſts of the Age,
And rais'd the lawful Heroes of the Stage:
Only th' *Athenian* Maſque was lay'd aſide,
And Chorus by the Muſick was ſupply'd.
Ingenious Love, inventive in new Arts,
Mingled in Plays, and quickly touch'd our Hearts:
This Paſſion never could reſiſtance find,
But knows the ſhorteſt paſſage to the mind.
Paint then, I'm pleas'd my Hero be in Love;
But let him not like a tame Shepherd move:
Let not *Achilles* be like *Thyrſis* ſeen,
Or for a *Cyrus* ſhow an * *Artamen*;
That, ſtrugling oft, his Paſſions we may find,
The Frailty, not the Virtue of his mind.
Of Romance Heroes ſhun the low Deſign;
Yet to great Hearts ſome Human frailties joyn:
Achilles muſt with *Homer*'s heat ingage;
For an affront I'm pleas'd to ſee him rage.

* Artamen, *the Name of* Cyrus *in* Scuderies *Romance.*

Thoſe little Failings in your Hero's Heart
Show that of Man and Nature he has part:
To leave known Rules you cannot be allow'd;
Make *Agamemnon* covetous, and proud,
Æneas in Religious Rites auſtere,
Keep to each Man his proper Character.
Of Countries and of Times the Humours know;
From diff'rent Climates, diff'ring Cuſtoms grow:
And ſtrive to ſhun their fault, who vainly dreſs
An Antique Hero like ſome modern Aſs;
Who make old *Romans* like our *Engliſh* move,
Show *Cato* Sparkiſh, or make *Brutus* Love.
In a Romance thoſe Errors are excus'd:
There 'tis enough that, Reading, we're amus'd:
Rules too ſevere would then be uſeleſs found;
But the ſtrict Scene muſt have a juſter bound:
Exact Decorum we muſt always find.
If then you form ſome Hero in your mind,
Be ſure your Image with it ſelf agree;
For what he firſt appears, he ſtill muſt be.
Affected Wits will nat'rally incline
To paint their Figures by their own deſign:
Your Bully Poets, Bully Heroes write;
Chapman, in *Buſſy D'Ambois* took delight,
And thought perfection was to Huff, and Fight.
Wiſe Nature by Variety does pleaſe;
Cloath diff'ring Paſſions in a diff'ring Dreſs:
Bold Anger, in rough haughty words appears,
Sorrow is humble, and diſſolves in Tears.

Make not your * *Hecuba* with Fury rage,
And ſhow a Ranting Grief upon the Stage;
Or tell in vain how the rough *Tanais* bore
His ſeven-fold Waters to the *Euxine* Shore:
Theſe ſwoll'n Expreſſions, this affected Noiſe
Shows like ſome Pedant, that declaims to Boys.
In ſorrow, you muſt ſofter Methods keep;
And, to excite our Tears, your ſelf muſt weep:
Thoſe noiſy words with which ill Plays abound,
Come not from Hearts that are in Sadneſs drown'd.
The Theatre for a young Poet's Rhymes
Is a bold venture in our knowing Times:
An Author cannot eas'ly purchaſe Fame;
Critics are always apt to hiſs, and blame:
You may be Judg'd by every Aſs in Town,
The Privilege is bought for half a Crown.
To pleaſe, you muſt a hundred Changes try;
Sometimes be humble, then muſt ſoar on high:
In noble Thoughts muſt every where abound,
Be eaſy, pleaſant, ſolid, and profound:
To theſe you muſt ſurpriſing Touches joyn,
And ſhow us a new Wonder in each Line;
That in a juſt Method well deſign'd,
May leave a ſtrong Impreſſion in the Mind,
Theſe are the Arts that Tragedy maintain:

The Epic.

But the Heroic claims a Loftier Strain.
In the Narration of ſome great Deſign,
Invention, Art, and Fable all muſt joyn:

* Seneca *Trag.*

Here Fiction muſt employ its utmoſt Grace;
All muſt aſſume a Body, Mind, and Face:
Each Virtue a Divinity is ſeen;
Prudence is *Pallas*, Beauty *Paphos* Queen.
'Tis not a Cloud from whence ſwift Lightning fly;
But *Jupiter*, that thunders from the Sky:
Nor a rough Storm, that gives the Sailor pain;
But angry *Neptune*, ploughing up the Main:
Echo's no more an empty Airy Sound;
But a fair Nymph that weeps, her Lover drown'd,
Thus in the endleſs Treaſure of his mind,
The Poet does a thouſand Figures find,
Around the Work his Ornaments he pours,
And ſtrows with laviſh hand his op'ning Flow'rs.
'Tis not a Wonder if a Tempeſt bore
The *Trojan* Fleet againſt the *Libyan* Shore;
From faithleſs Fortune this is no Surpriſe,
For every day 'tis common to our Eyes;
But angry *Juno*, that ſhe might deſtroy,
And overwhelm the reſt of ruin'd *Troy*:
That *Æolus* with the fierce Goddeſs joyn'd,
Op'ned the hollow Priſons of the Wind,
Till angry *Neptune*, looking o'er the Main,
Rebukes the Tempeſt, calms the Waves again,
Their Veſſels from the dang'rous Quick-ſands ſteers;
Theſe are the Springs that move our Hopes and Fears
Without theſe Ornaments before our Eyes,
Th' unſinew'd Poem languiſhes, and dyes;
Your Poet in his Art will always fail,
And tell you but a dull inſipid Tale,

In vain have our miſtaken Authors try'd
Theſe ancient Ornaments to lay aſide,
Thinking our God, and Prophets that he ſent,
Might act like thoſe the Poets did invent,
To fright poor Readers in each Line with Hell,
And talk of *Satan*, *Aſhtaroth*, and *Bel*;
The Myſteries which Chriſtians muſt believe,
Diſdain ſuch ſhifting Pageants to receive:
The Goſpel offers nothing to our Thoughts
But Penitence, or Puniſhment for Faults;
And mingling Falſhoods with thoſe Myſteries,
Would make our Sacred Truths appear like Lyes.
Beſides, what pleaſure can it be to hear,
The Howlings of repining *Lucifer*,
Whoſe Rage at your imagin'd Hero flyes,
And oft with God himſelf diſputes the Prize?
Taſſo, you'll ſay, has done it with applauſe;
It is not here I mean to Judge his Cauſe:
Yet, tho' our Age has ſo extoll'd his Name,
His Works had never gain'd immortal Fame,
If holy *Godfrey* in his Ecſtaſies
Had only conquer'd *Satan* on his Knees;
If *Tancred*, and *Armida*'s pleaſing Form,
Did not his melancholy Theme adorn.
'Tis not, that Chriſtian Poems ought to be
Fill'd with the Fictions of Idolatry;
But in a common Subject to reject
The Gods, and Heathen Ornaments neglect;
To baniſh Tritons who the Seas invade,
To take *Pan*'s Whiſtle, or the Fates degrade,

To hinder *Charon* in his leaky Boat
To paſs the Shepherd with the Man of Note,
Is with vain Scruples to diſturb your mind,
And ſearch Perfection you can never find:
As well they may forbid us to preſent
Prudence or Juſtice for an Ornament,
To paint old *Janus* with his Front of Braſs,
And take from *Time* his Scythe, his Wings and Glaſs,
And every where, as 't were Idolatry,
Baniſh Deſcriptions from our Poetry.
Leave 'em their pious Follies to purſue;
And let our Reaſon ſuch vain Fears ſubdue:
And let us not, amongſt our Vanities,
Of the true God create a God of Lyes.
In Fable we a thouſand pleaſures ſee,
And the ſmooth Names ſeem made for Poetry;
As *Hector*, *Alexander*, *Helen*, *Phillis*,
Ulyſſes, *Agamemnon*, and *Achilles*:
In ſuch a Crowd, the Poet were to blame
To chuſe King *Chilp'eric* for his Hero's Name.
Sometimes, the Name being well or ill apply'd,
Will the whole Fortune of your Work decide.
Would you your Reader never ſhould be tir'd?
Chuſe ſome great Hero, fit to be admir'd,
In Courage ſignal, and in Virtue bright,
Let ev'n his very Failings give delight;
Let his great Actions our Attention bind,
Like *Cæſar*, or like *Scipio*, frame his mind,
And not like *Oedipus* his perjur'd Race;
A common Conqueror is a Theme too baſe,

Chuſe not your Tale of Accidents too full;
Too much Variety may make it dull:
Achilles Rage alone, when wrought with Skill,
Abundantly does a whole Iliad fill.
Be your Narrations lively, ſhort, and ſmart;
In your Deſcriptions ſhow your nobleſt Art:
There 'tis your Poetry may be employ'd;
Yet you muſt trivial Accidents avoid.
Nor imitate that * Fool, who, to deſcribe
The wondrous Marches of the Choſen Tribe,
Plac'd on the ſides, to ſee their Armies paſs,
The Fiſhes ſtaring through the liquid Glaſs;
Deſcrib'd a Child, who with his little hand,
Pick'd up the ſhining Pebbles from the Sand.
Such Objects are too mean to ſtay our ſight;
Allow your Work a juſt and nobler flight.
Be your beginning plain; and take good heed
Too ſoon you mount not on the Airy Steed:
Nor tell your Reader, in a Thund'ring Verſe,
† *I ſing the Conqueror of the Univerſe.*
What can an Author after this produce?
The lab'ring Mountain muſt bring forth a Mouſe.
Much better are we pleas'd with his * Addreſs
Who, without making ſuch vaſt Promiſes,
Says, in an eaſier Stile and plainer Sence,
" I ſing the Combats of that pious Prince
" Who from the *Phrygian* Coaſt his Armies bore,
" And landed firſt on the *Livinian* Shore.
His op'ning Muſe ſets not the World on fire,
And yet performs more than we can require:

* St. *Amant*. † *The firſt Line of* Scuderies Alaric. * Virgils *Eneids*.

Quickly

Quickly you'll hear him celebrate the Fame,
And future Glory of the *Roman* Name;
Of *Styx* and *Acheron* deſcribe the Floods,
And *Cæſars* wandring in th' *Elyſian* Woods:
With Figures numberleſs his Story grace,
And every thing in beauteous Colours trace.
At once you may be pleaſing, and ſublime;
I hate a heavy melancholy Rhyme:
I'd rather read *Orlando*'s Comic Tale,
Than a dull Author always ſtiff and ſtale,
Who thinks himſelf diſhonour'd in his Stile,
If on his Works the Graces do but ſmile.
'Tis ſaid, that *Homer*, Matchleſs in his Art,
Stole *Venus* Girdle, to ingage the Heart:
His Works indeed vaſt Treaſures do unfold,
And whatſo'er he touches, turns to Gold:
All in his hands new Beauty does acquire;
He always pleaſes, and can never tire.
A happy Warmth he every where may boaſt;
Nor is he in too long Digreſſions loſt:
His Verſes without Rule a Method find,
And of themſelves appear in order joyn'd:
All without trouble anſwers his Intent;
Each Syllable is tending to th' Event.
Let his Example your Endeavours raiſe:
To love his Writings, is a kind of praiſe.
A Poem, where we all perfections find,
Is not the Work of a Fantaſtick Mind:
There muſt be Care, and Time, and Skill, and Pains;
Not the firſt Heat of unexperienc'd Brains.

Yet ſometimes Artleſs Poets, when the rage
Of a warm Fancy does their Minds engage,
Puff'd with vain pride, preſume they underſtand,
And boldly take the Trumpet in their hand;
Their Fuſtian Muſe each Accident conſounds;
Nor can ſhe fly, but riſe by leaps and bounds,
Till their ſmall Stock of Learning quickly ſpent,
Their Poem dies for want of Nourishment:
In vain Mankind the hot-brain'd Fools decryes,
No branding Cenſures can unveil his Eyes;
With Impudence the Laurel they invade,
Reſolv'd to like the Monſters they have made.
Virgil, compar'd to them, is flat and dry;
And *Homer* underſtood not Poetry;
Againſt their merit if this Age Rebel,
To future times for Juſtice they appeal.
But waiting till Mankind ſhall do 'em right,
And bring their Works Triumphantly to light;
Neglected heaps we in by-corners lay,
Where they become to Worms and Moths a Prey;
Forgot, in Duſt and Cobwebs let 'em reſt,
Whilſt we return from whence we firſt digreſt.

The great Succeſs which Tragic Writers found,
In *Athens* firſt the Comedy renown'd;
Th' abuſive *Grecian* there, by pleaſing ways,
Diſpers'd his nat'ral Malice in his Plays:
Wiſdom, and Virtue, Honour, Wit, and Sence,
Were ſubject to Buffooning Inſolence:
Poets were publickly approv'd, and ſought,
That Vice extol'd, and Virtue ſet at naught;

And *Socrates* himself, in that loose Age,
Was made the Pastime of a scoffing Stage.
At last the Publick took in hand the Cause,
And cur'd this Madness by the Pow'r of Laws;
Forbad at any time, or any place,
To name the Person, or describe the Face.
The Stage its ancient Fury thus let fall,
And Comedy diverted without Gall:
By mild Reproofs, reform'd minds disease'd,
And, sparing Persons, innocently pleas'd.
Each one was nicely shown in this new Glass,
And smil'd to think He was not meant the Ass.
A Miser oft would laugh the first, to find
A faithful Draught of his own sordid mind;
And Fops were with such Care and Cunning writ,
They lik'd the Piece for which themselves did sit.
You then, that would the Comic Laurels wear,
To study Nature be your only Care:
Who e'er knows Man, and by a curious Art
Discerns the hidden Secrets of the Heart;
He who observes, and naturally can paint
The jealous Fool, the fawning Sycophant,
A sober Wit, an enterprising Ass,
A humorous *Otter*, or a *Hudibras*;
May safely in these noble Lists engage,
And make 'em Act and Speak upon the Stage:
Strive to be natural in all you write,
And paint with Colours that may please the Sight.
Nature in various Figures does abound,
And in each mind are diff'rent Humors found:

A Glance, a Touch, diſcovers to the wiſe;
But every Man has not diſcerning Eyes.
All-changing Time does alſo change the mind;
And diff'rent Ages, diff'rent Pleaſures find:
Youth, hot and furious, cannot brook delay,
By flattering Vice is eas'ly led away;
Vain in Diſcourſe, inconſtant in Deſire,
In Cenſure, raſh; in Pleaſures, all on fire.
The manly Age does ſteadier Thoughts enjoy;
Pow'r, and Ambition do his Soul employ:
Againſt the turns of Fate he ſets his mind;
And by the paſt the future Hopes to find.
Decrepit Age, ſtill adding to his Stores,
For others heaps the Treaſure he adores.
In all his actions keeps a frozen pace;
Paſt Times extols, the preſent to debaſe:
Incapable of pleaſures Youth abuſe,
In others blames, what age does him refuſe.
Your Actors muſt by Reaſon be control'd;
Let young Men ſpeak like young, old Men like old:
Obſerve the Town, and ſtudy well the Court;
For thither various Characters reſort;
Thus 'twas great *Johnſon* purchas'd his Renown,
And in his Art had born away the Crown;
If leſs deſirous of the Peoples praiſe,
He had not with low Farce debas'd his Plays;
Mixing dull Buffoonry with Wit refin'd,
And *Harlequin* with noble *Terence* joyn'd.
When in the Fox I ſee the Tortois hiſt,
I loſe the Author of the Alchymiſt.

The Comic Wit, born with a ſmiling Air,
Muſt Tragic Grief, and pompous Verſe forbear;
Yet may he not, as on a Market-place,
With Baudy Jeſts amuſe the Populace:
With well-bred Converſation you muſt pleaſe,
And your Intrigue unravel'd be with eaſe:
Your Action ſtill ſhould Reaſon's Rules obey,
Nor in an empty Scene may loſe its way.
Your humble Stile muſt ſometimes gently riſe;
And your Diſcourſe Sententious be, and Wiſe.
The Paſſions muſt to Nature be confin'd,
And Scenes to Scenes with artful weaving joyn'd:
Your Wit muſt not unſeaſonably play;
But follow Buſ'neſs, never lead the way.
Obſerve how *Terence* does this Error ſhun;
A careful Father chides his am'rous Son:
Then ſee that Son, whom no advice can move,
Forget thoſe Orders, and purſue his Love:
'Tis not a well-drawn Picture we diſcover;
'Tis a true Son, a Father, and a Lover.
I like an Author that reforms the Age;
And keeps the right Decorum of the Stage,
That always pleaſes by juſt Reaſon's Rule:
But for a tedious Droll, a Quibling Fool,
Who with low nauſeous Baudry fills his Plays;
Let him begon and on two Treſſels raiſe
Some *Smithfield* Stage, where he may act his Pranks,
And make *Jack Puddings* ſpeak to Mountebanks.

Canto IV.

IN *Florence* dwelt a Doctor of Renown,
The Scourge of God, and Terror of the Town,
Who all the Cant of Phyſick had by heart,
And never murder'd but by Rules of Art.
The public Miſchief was his private Gain;
Children their ſlaughter'd Parents ſought in vain!
A Brother here his poyſon'd Brother wept;
Some bloodleſs dy'd, and ſome by *Opium* ſlept.
Colds, at his Preſence, would to Frenzies turn;
And Agues, like malignant Fevers, burn.
Hated, at laſt, his Practice gives him o'er:
One Friend, unkill'd by Drugs, of all his Store,
In his new Country-houſe affords him place,
'Twas a rich Abbot, and a Building Aſs:
Here firſt the Doctor's Talent came in play,
He ſeems inſpir'd, and talks like * *Wren* or *Maj*:
Of this new Portico condemns the Face,
And turns the Entrance to a better place;
Deſigns the Stair-caſe at the other end.
His Friend approves, does for his Maſon ſend,
He comes; the Doctor's Arguments prevail.
In ſhort, to finiſh this our hum'rous Tale,
He *Galen*'s dang'rous Science does reject,
And from ill Doctor turn good Architect.
In this Example we may have our part:
Rather be Maſon, ('tis an uſeful Art!)

* *The King's Architects.*

Than a dull Poet; for that Trade accurſt,
Admits no mean betwixt the Beſt and Worſt.
In other Sciences, without Diſgrace
A Candidate may fill a ſecond place;
But Poetry no medium can admit,
No Reader ſuffers an indiff'rent Wit:
The ruin'd Stationers againſt him baul,
And *Herringman* degrades him from his Stall.
Burleſque, at leaſt our Laughter may excite;
But a cold Writer never can delight.
The *Counter-Scuffle* has more Wit and Art,
Than the ſtiff formal Stile of *Gondibert*.
Be not effected with that empty praiſe
Which your vain Flatterers will ſometimes raiſe,
And when you read, with Ecſtaſie will ſay,
The finiſh'd Piece! The admirable Play!
Which when expos'd to Cenſure and to Light,
Cannot indure a Critic's piercing ſight.
A hundred Authors Fates have been foretold,
And *Sh—le*'s Works are printed, but not ſold.
Hear all the World; conſider every Thought;
A Fool by chance may ſtumble on a Fault:
Yet, when *Apollo* does your Muſe inſpire,
Be not impatient to expoſe your Fire;
Nor imitate the *Settles* of our Times,
Thoſe Tuneful Readers of their own dull Rhymes,
Who ſeize on all th' Acquaintance they can meet,
And ſtop the Paſſengers that walk the Street;
There is no Sanctuary you can chuſe
For a Defence from their purſuing Muſe.
I've ſaid before, Be patient when they blame;
To alter for the better is no Shame.

Ye

Yet yield not to a Fool's Impertinence:
Sometimes conceited Sceptics void of Sence,
By their falſe Taſte condemn ſome finiſh'd part,
And blame the nobleſt flights of Wit and Art.
In vain their fond Opinions you deride,
With their lov'd Follies they are ſatisfy'd;
And their weak Judgment, void of Sence and Light,
Thinks nothing can eſcape their feeble ſight:
Their dang'rous Counſels do not cure, but wound;
To ſhun the Storm, they run your Verſe aground,
And thinking to eſcape a Rock, are drown'd.
Chuſe a ſure Judge to Cenſure what you write,
Whoſe Reaſon leads, and Knowledge gives you light,
Whoſe ſteady hand will prove your faithful Guide,
And touch the darling Follies you would hide:
He, in your doubts, will carefully adviſe,
And clear the Miſt before your feeble Eyes.
'Tis he will tell you, to what noble height
A generous Muſe may ſometimes take her flight;
When, too much fetter'd with the Rules of Art,
May from her ſtricter Bounds and Limits part;
But ſuch a perfect Judge is hard to ſee,
And every Rhymer knows not Poetry;
Nay ſome there are, for writing Verſe extol'd,
Who know not *Lucan*'s Droſs from *Virgil*'s Gold.
Would you in this great Art acquire Renown:
Authors, obſerve the Rules I here lay down.
In prudent Leſſons every where abound;
With pleaſant, joyn the uſeful and the ſound:
A ſober Reader, a vain Tale will ſlight;
He ſeeks as well Inſtruction, as Delight.

Let all your Thoughts to Virtue be confin'd,
Still off'ring noble Figures to our Mind:
I like not thoſe looſe Writers, who employ
Their guilty Muſe, good Manners to deſtroy;
Who with falſe Colours ſtill deceive our Eyes,
And ſhow us Vice dreſs'd in a fair Diſguiſe.
Yet do I not their ſullen Muſe approve
Who from all modeſt Writings baniſh Love;
That ſtrip the Play-houſe of its chief Intrigue,
And make a Murderer of *Roderigue*:
* The lighteſt Love, if decently expreſt,
Will raiſe no Vicious Motions in our Breſt.
Dido in vain may weep, and ask relief;
I blame her Folly, whil'ſt I ſhare her Grief.
A Virtuous Author, in his Charming Art,
To pleaſe the Senſe needs not corrupt the Heart;
His heat will never cauſe a guilty Fire:
To follow Virtue then be your deſire.
In vain your Art and Vigor are expreſt;
Th' obſcene Expreſſion ſhows th' infected Breaſt.
But above all, baſe Jealouſies avoid,
In which detracting Poets are employ'd:
A noble Wit dares lib'rally commend;
And ſcorns to grudge at his deſerving Friend.
Baſe Rivals, who true Wit and Merit hate,
Caballing ſtill againſt it with the Great,
Maliciouſly aſpire to gain Renown
By ſtanding up, and pulling others down.
Never debaſe your ſelf by Treacherous ways,
Nor by ſuch abject Methods ſeek for praiſe:

* *The Cid, Tranſlated into* Engliſh.

Let

Let not your only buſ'neſs be to write;
Be Virtuous, Juſt, and in your Friends delight.
'Tis not enough your Poems be admir'd;
But ſtrive your Converſation be deſir'd:
Write for immortal Fame; not ever chuſe
Gold for the Object of a gen'rous Muſe.
I know a noble Wit may, without Crime,
Receive a lawful Tribute for his time:
Yet I abhor thoſe Writers, who deſpiſe
Their Honor; and alone their Profit prize;
Who their *Apollo* baſely will degrade,
And of a noble Science, make a Trade.
Before kind Reaſon did her Light diſplay,
And Government taught Mortals to obey,
Men, like wild Beaſts, did Nature's Laws purſue,
They fed on Herbs, and drink from Rivers drew;
Their Brutal force, on Luſt and Rapine bent,
Committed Murders without Puniſhment:
Reaſon at laſt, by her all conquering Arts,
Reduc'd theſe Savages, and run'd their Hearts;
Mankind from Bogs, and Woods, and Caverns calls,
And Towns and Cities fortifies with Walls:
Thus fear of Juſtice made proud Rapine ceaſe,
And ſhelter'd Innocence by Laws and Peace.
These Benefits from Poets we receiv'd,
From whence are rais'd thoſe Fictions ſince believ'd,
That *Orpheus*, by his ſoft Harmonious ſtrains
Tam'd the fierce Tygers of the *Thracian* Plains;
Amphion's Notes, by their melodious pow'rs,
Drew Rocks and Woods, and rais'd the *Theban* Tow'rs:

These Miracles from Numbers did arise,
Since which, in Verse Heav'n taught his Mysteries,
And by a Priest, possess'd with Rage Divine,
Apollo spoke from his Prophetick Shrine.
Soon after *Homer* the old Heroes prais'd,
And noble Minds by great Examples rais'd;
Then *Hesiod* did his *Grecian* Swains incline
To till the Fields, and prune the bounteous Vine.
Thus useful Rules were by the Poets aid,
In easy Numbers, to rude Men convey'd,
And pleasingly their Precepts did impart;
First charm'd the Ear, and then ingag'd the Heart:
The Muses thus their Reputation rais'd,
And with just Gratitude in *Greece* were prais'd.
With Pleasure Mortals did their Wonders see,
And sacrific'd to their Divinity:
But Want, at last base Flatt'ry entertain'd,
And old *Parnassus* with this Vice was stain'd;
Desire of Gain dazling the Poets Eyes,
Their Works were fill'd with fulsome Flatteries,
Thus needy Wits a vile Revenue made,
And Verse became a mercenary Trade.
Debase not with so mean a Vice thy Art:
If Gold must be the Idol of thy Heart,
Fly, fly th' unfruitful *Heliconian* strand,
Those Streams are not enrich'd with Golden Sand:
Great Wits, as well as Warriours, only gain
Laurels and Honors for their Toil and Pain:
But, what? an Author cannot live on Fame,
Or pay a Reck'ning with a lofty Name:

A Poet to whom Fortune is unkind,
Who when he goes to Bed has hardly din'd;
Takes little pleasure in *Parnassus* Dreams,
Or relishes the *Heliconian* Streams.
Horace had Ease and Plenty when he writ,
And free from Cares for Money or for Meat,
Did not expect his Dinner from his Wit.
'Tis true; but Verse is cherish'd by the Great,
And now none famish who deserve to eat:
What can we fear, when Virtue, Arts, and Sence,
Receive the Stars propitious Influence;
When a sharp-sighted Prince, by early Grants
Rewards your Merits, and prevents your Wants?
Sing then his Glory, Celebrate his Fame;
Your Noblest Theme is his immortal Name.
Let mighty *Spencer* raise his reverend Head,
Cowley and *Denham* start up from the dead;
Waller his Age renew, and Off'rings bring,
Our Monarch's praise let bright-ey'd Virgins sing;
Let *Dryden* with new Rules our Stage refine,
And his great Models form by this Design:
But where's a second *Virgil*, to Rehearse
Our Hero's Glories in his Epic Verse?
What *Orpheus* sing his Triumphs o'er the Main,
And make the Hills and Forests move again;
Show his bold Fleet on the *Batavian* Shore,
And *Holland* trembling as his Cannons roar;
Paint *Europe*'s Balance in his steady hand,
Whilst the two Worlds in Expectation stand
Of Peace or War, that wait on his Command?

But, as I ſpeak, new Glories ſtrike my Eyes,
Glories, which Heav'n it Self does give, and prize,
Bleſſings of Peace; that with their milder Rays
Adorn his Reign, and bring *Saturnian* Days:
Now let Rebellion, Diſcord, Vice, and Rage,
That have in Patriots Forms debauch'd our Age,
Vaniſh, with all the Miniſters of Hell;
His Rays their poyſ'nous Vapors ſhall diſpel:
Tis he alone our Safety did create,
His own firm Soul ſecur'd the Nation's Fate,
Oppos'd to all the *bouſeaux* of the State.
Authors, for Him your great indeavours raiſe;
The loftieſt Numbers will but reach his praiſe.
For me, whoſe Verſe in Satyr has been bred,
And never durſt Heroic Meaſures tread,
Yet you ſhall ſee me, in that famous Field
With Eyes and Voice, my beſt Aſſiſtance yield;
Offer you Leſſons, that my Infant Muſe
Learnt, when ſhe *Horace* for her Guide did chuſe:
Second your Zeal with Wiſhes, Heart, and Eyes,
And afar off hold up the glorious Prize.
But pardon too, if, Zealous for the Right,
A ſtrict Obſerver of each Noble Flight,
From the fine Gold I ſeparate th' Allay,
And ſhow how haſty Writers ſometimes ſtray:
Apter to blame, than knowing how to mend;
A ſharp, but yet a neceſſary Friend.

BRITISH MUSEUM

FINIS.